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**General Assembly to receive Home-Delivered Meals;
AARP and others to advocate for recurring funding for
home- and community- based services**

AARP South Carolina, along with numerous partner organizations who support increased funding for home- and community-based services, will provide a unique lunch to the General Assembly on **WEDNESDAY, March 28** on the Capitol grounds between the Blatt and Gressette Buildings. The lunch will feature home-delivered meals typically provided to more than 8,000 older South Carolinians on a daily basis.

“It is crucial that the General Assembly recognize the importance of home- and community-based services that so many older South Carolinians depend upon,” said Jane Wiley, AARP South Carolina State Director. “We want the Senate to make funding for home- and community-based services part of the recurring appropriations bill.”

The Older Americans Act provides federal funding for services to seniors to remain in their homes through the Lt. Governor’s Office on Aging. Home- and community- based services include congregate meals, home delivered meals, home care and physical fitness services. Since July of 2006 more than 3,000 older South Carolinians have been identified as needing these critical services. With last year’s non-recurring appropriation of \$2.9 million, only two-thirds of this number can receive services.

Lt. Governor Andre’ Bauer, who oversees the state’s Office on Aging, is conducting a survey with recipients of home- and community based services to gauge the quality and value of the services. Everyone reports satisfaction with the meals, and report that these services make a difference in their life by being "one good meal a day," "meeting people made me feel better," "helps me to stay in my home."

“It’s very gratifying to read the words of these citizens and hear directly how our state’s home- and community- based services are impacting there lives, Bauer said.” “For some, it’s the only thing standing between independence and entering an assisted living facility.”

According to the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging, providing community-based services such as home-delivered meals, home care and transportation cost an average of \$624 per individual annually – which is a bargain compared to nursing home care at \$25,000 per person in Medicaid expenditures.

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Written comments from home- and community- based services recipients:

“I had both wrists broken at the same time, and I am back on my feet. Had it not been for the home delivered meals I would have had to go into a nursing home. This is often the only meal we receive, plus the people that bring the meal are also our lifeline. They are the only ones we see sometimes.”

“I have depression and it really has helped me. The fellowship is wonderful.”

“It is a blessing to have this service”

“It helps me to get away from home to meet with other people. It gives me spiritual and moral support and fellowship.”

“Thank you for this meal I receive. I am diabetic and this one meal has made a difference in my life. I eat it at dinner time when I take most of my meds. I can eat a sandwich for lunch and cereal for breakfast.”

“At the present time I do not need this service. I am 70 years old, and I do help deliver mobile meals. I enjoy it and the people enjoy the service.”

ABOUT AARP: AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. We produce AARP The Magazine, published bimonthly; AARP Bulletin, our monthly newspaper; AARP Segunda Juventud, our bimonthly magazine in Spanish and English; NRTA Live & Learn, our quarterly newsletter for 50+ educators; and our Web site, www.aarp.org. AARP Foundation is our affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Partner organizations include: SC Association of Council on Aging Directors, SC Area Agencies on Aging, SC Association of Adult Day Services, Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Disability Action Center, Disability Solutions, SC Independent Living Council, SC Independent Living Council, and the Disability Resource Center.